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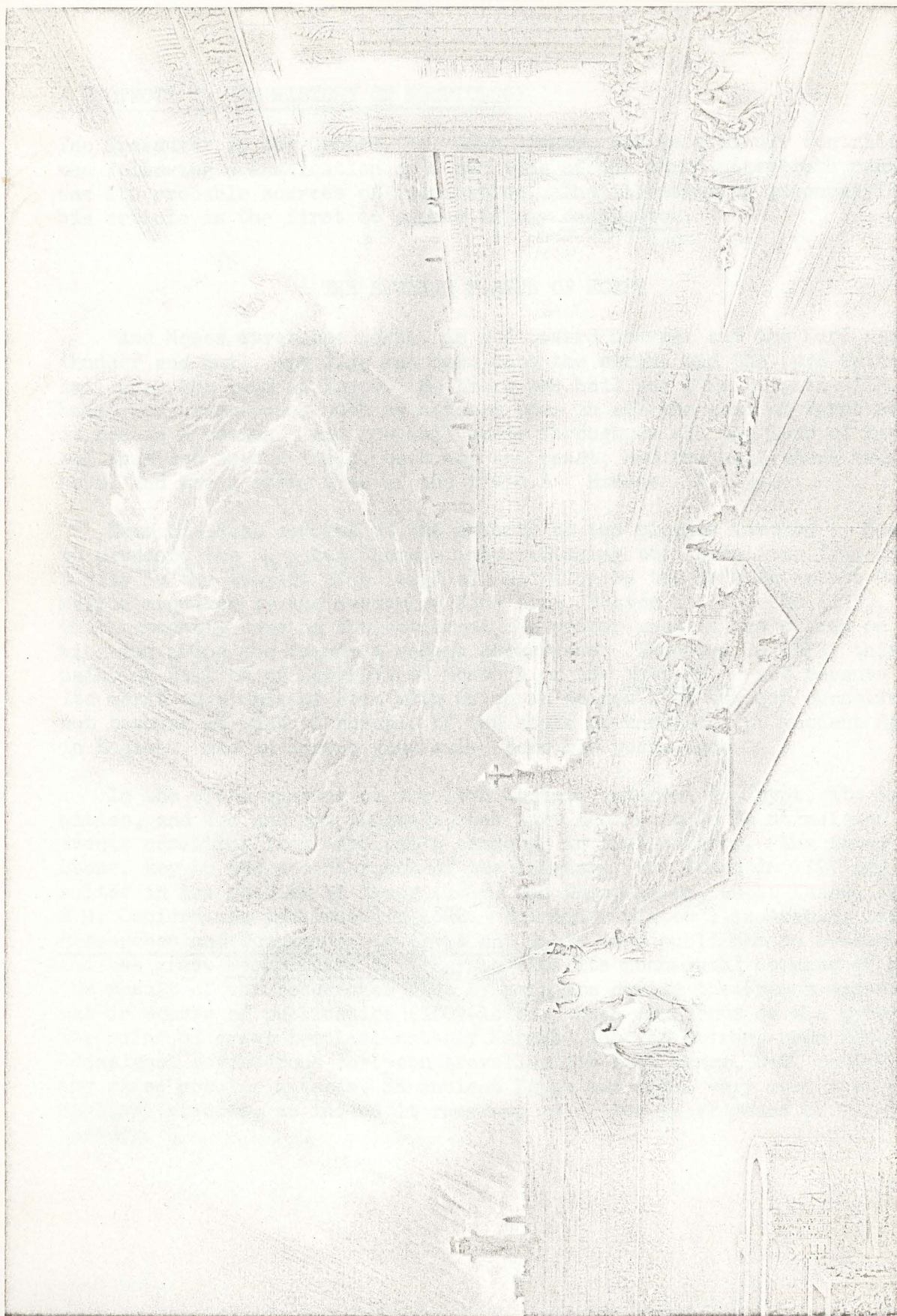
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John Martin: The Seventh Plague of Egypt

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



### A FOOTNOTE TO THE HISTORY OF EGYPTOLOGY

The Treasurer of the Center, Mr. Dows Dunham, has very kindly contributed the following communication on a painting of the early nineteenth century and its probable sources of inspiration. The illustration accompanying his article is the first to appear in any Newsletter.

### THE SEVENTH PLAGUE OF EGYPT

"And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and fire ran down unto the earth; and the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt. So there was hail and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as had not been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb, and brake every tree of the field." Exodus: IX, 23-25.

This biblical account of the seventh of the plagues invoked by Moses to pressure the Egyptian Pharaoh into releasing the Israelites from captivity is the subject of a large oil painting by the British artist John Martin acquired by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in 1960 (60.1157), which recently came to the notice of the writer when it was placed on exhibition among the Museum's recent accessions. Executed in 1823, this painting will be of interest to readers of the Newsletter not because of its merit as a work of art, with which we do not here concern ourselves, but because of what it reveals of the state of knowledge of ancient Egypt in England, and in Europe generally, some 138 years ago.

In the first quarter of the 19th Century interest in Egypt, its antiquities, and its ancient language, was just beginning to be stimulated by the events resulting from Napoleon's campaign in that country. The famed Rosetta Stone, key to the decipherment of the language, was found in 1799 and resulted in the studies of Young (1818) and Champollion, whose famous "Lettre à M. Dacier" was published in 1822. Belzoni's plates illustrating his Researches and Operations in Egypt and Nubia were published in London in 1820, and the great Description de l'Egypte with its monumental volumes of plates, the result of the researches made by scholars during the French expedition, was in course of publication (1809-1828). Such monuments as the pyramids and the ruins of great temples, notably Karnak, had, of course, been known to the occasional adventurous European traveller for many years, but, in Britain at any rate, popular interest in ancient Egypt was still very much incidental to Biblical studies, as indeed it remained until the later years of the 19th Century.



We have no concrete evidence that John Martin was especially interested in ancient Egyptian lore. In his earlier years at any rate (he painted this picture at the age of 34) he held orthodox Church of England views and had many clerical friends, although he also had a wide acquaintance in literary, scientific, and scholarly circles. Of the 112 oil paintings credited to his brush, approximately half were of biblical subjects from both the Old and New Testaments, and these show not only fertile imagination but a highly developed dramatic sense. One suspects that he had heard something of the new knowledge coming out of Egypt, and had probably seen some of the new publications which were just beginning to appear, yet in the light of our knowledge today his representation of the Egyptian scene is quite fantastic, and is clearly primarily of his own imagining.

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A few details in the picture call for some comment. The center of

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1. I have to thank the Department of Paintings of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, for permission to publish a photograph and comment.
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interest is the figure of Moses invoking the wrath of Jehovah. He stands on a terrace at the head of a monumental stairway, while behind him one sees the end of what is clearly a granite sarcophagus ornamented with figures of deities, hieroglyphic inscriptions, and the so-called "sacred eye", although these details are not entirely correct and this is certainly no place in which a sarcophagus would have been placed. The sarcophagus here represented may well have been inspired by the one drawn in the Description, Plate Vol. V, Pl. 24. In the background, on the left, rises a pillar on which one recognizes the figure of the Apis bull, and beyond that a rather squat and ill-proportioned obelisk. In the center, foundering ships are represented in a harbor, ships which seem to be based on Classical prototypes, not Egyptian ones, while looking down on this scene are four groups of paired sphinxes, obviously female and so again un-Egyptian. On piers jutting out into the harbor are circular towers supporting groups of flaming torches, and one wonders whether these may have been inspired by accounts of the well-known Pharos of Alexandria. To the right stands a series of massive buildings with many porticos and rows of columns, mostly on too small a scale to be clearly made out in detail. In the right foreground, however, two columns are shown in closer view, supporting an elaborate cavetto cornice. These seem to have been inspired by drawings of columns of the Ptolemaic or Roman periods; for example Description, Plate Vol. I, Pl. 56, shows capitals about identical, although the fluted shafts cannot be cited in combination with such capitals. Further off, a long portico shows a row of columns with capitals representing



the head of the goddess Hathor, a type well-known in late Egyptian architecture. 2.

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2. See, for example, Description, Plate Vol. IV, Pl. 9, and V, Pl. 30.

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Finally, on the horizon, we see three great pyramids which correspond very well in form to the Giza group well known for many centuries. A fourth, however, is ridiculously pointed and bears at its apex a statue of some sort.

These are but a selection from the many details in this picture which might give rise to comment. The whole is, of course, purely imaginary and there are few details which would bear scrutiny by anyone conversant with modern knowledge in the field. Yet it has fascinated the writer because it seems to be an early example of interest in ancient Egyptian architecture, and he feels convinced that John Martin had seen at least the Description de L'Egypte.

Dows Dunham

#### AN AMERICAN EXPEDITION TO NUBIA

The two following letters are concerned with one of the first of the American salvage expeditions in the area to be flooded by the projected High Dam. Dr. William Kelly Simpson of Yale University, who headed the expedition, has kindly furnished a brief resume of its scientific accomplishment, and Mr. Edward L. B. Terrace of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, has added a background of local color for a season of arduous work.

New Haven, Connecticut  
June 22, 1961

Dear Members:

The first season of work in Nubia sponsored by the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania and the Peabody Museum of Yale University came to a successful close at the end of March. This joint expedition was made possible through the Eckley B. Coxe, Jr., endowment of the University Museum and a grant made to the Peabody Museum by the Bollingen Foundation, established by Mr. Paul Mellon, and the staff included four members of the



Center. It consisted of myself as director, Nicholas B. Millet, who heads the Center's Cairo office, as assistant director, James Delmage of Montreal as photographer, Anthony Casendino of the Fulbright Foundation in Rome and Jean Jacquet of the Egyptian Documentation Center as architects, Edward L. B. Terrace of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Mme. Jacquet, formerly Egyptological Fellow of the Center in Egypt, as archaeological assistants, and Mahir Saleeb as representative of the Service of Antiquities. Through the kindness of Dr. Hanns Stock, Director of the Cairo branch of the German Archaeological Institute, a large part of the expedition's equipment was kindly lent by that Institute.

The Egyptian Government granted the expedition a concession in an area roughly between Abu Simbel in the south and Aniba in the north. Here we selected several sites for excavation during our first season and chose others for future examination. During this first year, we surveyed and partly excavated a Romano-Nubian cemetery at Toshka West; a small cemetery of the following X-group period, a group of Coptic buildings, and a series of houses used successively in Meroitic, X-group, and Coptic times at Arminna West; and a Middle Kingdom Cemetery and three rock-cut tombs of the New Kingdom at Toshka East.

Since Toshka West was the terminus of a route leading to and from the diorite and amethyst quarries in use during the Old and Middle Kingdoms, it was not surprising to find there two texts dating from these periods. The first is a fragmentary and greatly disintegrated stone discovered under the gangplank of the expedition boat, with an inscription mentioning the place name Satju and probably thus permitting the identification of that place with Toshka. The second text, previously found by the villagers and discovered by us near the local mosque, records an expedition to the quarries in Year 4 of the Twelfth Dynasty Pharaoh Amenemhet II (1927 B.C.). This expedition, under the leadership of the herald Horemhet, consisted of more than 1200 workmen accompanied by 1000 donkeys for supply and transport.

Most of our time at Toshka West was spent in the examination of a large Meroitic cemetery, which we estimated to include around 600 graves. This cemetery, while not entirely neglected by ancient plunderers, had not previously been investigated or noticed in modern times. We excavated around sixty graves, finding, in addition to some fine decorated pottery beakers, vessels in copper and glass, a wooden kohl tube with inlaid ivory pegs, a copper ring with its bezel bearing an engraved figure of the god Bes, and a copper ladle with a handle ending in the head of a serpent. This last object is almost a duplicate of one found by Woolley and MacIvor at Aniba (Karanog) and seems, in connection with other of our findings, to prove that the Toshka and Aniba cemeteries are of the same date.



Perhaps the most interesting of all our investigations of this season just past is that made in the tomb of Heka-nefer, one of three New Kingdom tombs we cleared at Toshka East. Heka-nefer was a prince of Miam in the reign of Tutankhamun. He appears in the Theban tomb of the Viceroy of Nubia, Huy, as a Nubian, in a procession bearing tribute from the Southland -- ivory, gold, ostrich feathers, and a giraffe. In his tomb at Toshka, however, Heka-nefer has had himself represented as an Egyptian. He seems to have been so thoroughly Egyptianized that he not only copied the plan of the tomb of his superior, Huy, but apparently (as suggested by the traces of paintings that remain) imported a Theban artist to decorate it. Such fragments of equipment as we found show that the furnishings of the tomb were also of Theban origin. Indeed only the representation in the tomb of Huy and the fact that he was buried at Toshka indicate that Heka-nefer was not Egyptian, as indeed might also be surmised from one of his titles, "Child of the Nursery," which is frequently a designation of foreigners educated with the royal children at the Theban court.

It is gratifying to record that most of the finds made during this first season, including a number of important objects, were assigned to the expedition, the Egyptian Museum in Cairo retaining for its collection only four pieces, the stela of Horemhet, a Meroitic seal ring, and two stone shawabtis of Heka-nefer.

William K. Simpson

Boston, Massachusetts  
June 22, 1961

Dear Members:

On Wednesday the 25th of January, 1961, the members of the Pennsylvania-Yale Expedition to Nubia arrived hopefully in Aswan, to begin final preparations for a safari into the Nubian Desert. After no little difficulty in outfitting, repairing, and supplying a boat borrowed from the German Institute in Cairo, and hiring a crew, we found ourselves ready to embark five days later. Our boat -- named the Amada in honour of the Nubian site excavated by the Germans -- was a trim vessel originally intended for holiday fishing expeditions of industrialists in the North Sea. It was fitted out for two passengers and a crew of at most three. To the huzzahs of officials and employees of the Hochtief firm, we set forth from our berth just by the Aswan Dam with a crew of four and four members of the Expedition, including Dr. Simpson, James Delmege, A. B. Casendino and myself. Our crew consisted of the worthy Ismain, a one-eyed Nubian of stern mien and sterner temperament,



who acted as captian and navigator; Ismain's nephew Zaki, an impish youth whose primary duties seemed to be drying dishes for the cook and leaping into the Nile with a hefty line whenever the boat was moored; Ahmed, a proud gentleman who wore trousers, was reputed to have some knowledge of mechanical things, and therefore bore the title of mechanic and greased the engine; and last but by no means least Mohammed, the cook whom we had brought with us from Luxor and who had presumably never before traveled in a second-class Wagon-Lit compartment. We were gratified to discover that Mohammed did indeed have certain talents as a chef -- his last testimonial had been signed in 1935.

With, then, a certain spirit of adventurous uncertainty, but with sanguine hearts, we sailed off between the grey cliffs that border the Nile for many miles above Aswan. The first night was spent at Dakka, whose charming white-washed houses we saw first in the early light of the next morning. After stops at Wadi es-Sebua (where the French Institute had arrived only hours before to begin their work) and at Qasr Ibrim (Roman Primis and perhaps the Miam of the New Kingdom), we came to Aniba, thought by some to be the site of the ancient Miam and once again in modern times capital of Egyptian Nubia. Here we found the Egyptian scholar, Professor Abu Bakr, with a fleet of elegant boats and a large staff of assistants. It must be confessed that the facilities provided for them caused a slight amount of envy although certainly not discouragement!

The following morning we bade farewell to this last outpost of what might be called civilized life and after an hour and a half's ride we came within sight of the twin mounds of Gebel Agg, which marked the northern extremity of our concession. We then sought moorage in the Khor Gohur at the northern edge of the village of Toshka East, our first destination. Somewhat like a conquering army, the Expedition disembarked attired in desert fatigues and bearing the weapons of the archaeologist: pencils, notebooks, field glasses, maps, cameras. It was with eagerness that we came upon our first primitive rock drawings carved in the grey sandstone which lends to the east bank of the Nile in Nubia a certain sombreness and air of desolation. As we made a stately progress through the village of Toshka, we soon realized that we were becoming the objects of increasing curiosity on the part of the villagers, and it was not long before we had at our heels a pied-piper's train of children of all ages and sizes. Engaging as these tots were -- it was with the utmost reluctance that we had at times to shoo them off -- we occasionally found tiresome their armfuls of sherds of Qena ware and local pottery. It must be admitted that to them our constant search of desert sands for potsherds must have seemed much like a beach-cleaning operation.



Our next objective, Toshka West, was in striking contrast to the drabness of Toshka East, whose grey Nile-mud walls were a fitting background for the withdrawing black-robed ladies of the village. Not only did the inhabitants of Toshka West have flourishing fields, but their houses were prettily white-washed and often gaily decorated with scenes painted in vivid colours (one such house bore what appeared to this writer to be the lions of the arms of the Persian Court!).. The ladies of the village, though somewhat shy at first, later treated us with respectful interest and perhaps some amusement. They were a delight to our eyes, wearied of the dull colors of the other side of the river. Bright oranges, yellows, greens, and purples complemented black robes, and a generous use of gold in ears and noses and on necks and arms added to their festive air. Amid the glorious golden-yellow sands of the Western Desert, the place seemed a veritable paradise. Whereas at Toshka East the Expedition had had the exercise of walking several times a day the nearly two miles which separated work from the boat, at Toshka West we were able to pitch camp in the midst of an idyllic grove of palms, only a few steps from the boat and therefore from our meals.

In connection with meals, it may be mentioned here that Toshka West is evidently the tomato-basket of Lower Nubia, for we were never without a fresh supply. Nor did we suffer a dearth of fresh meat in the form of chicken, duck, turkey -- fine examples of these estimable fowl were brought for our inspection, trussed in much the way in which they are seen in ancient paintings and reliefs. These birds augmented our diminishing (and happily so) supply of bully beef and tinned mackerel. With the arrival of Nicholas B. Millet, Director of the American Research Center and Assistant Director of the Expedition, and of Mr. Maher Salib, Inspector from the Egyptian Department of Antiquities, a full complement of six was reached. It is with some amazement that one recalls the skill with which the good Mohammed presented each morning twelve beautifully fried eggs for the delectation of the Expedition. Those Members of the Center who have culinary interests will perhaps be surprised to know that the birds mentioned above were roasted in a sauce-pan over a single gas flame.

We departed from Toshka West with some sadness, leaving behind the good villagers and their copious supply of food, and moved some ten kilometres farther south to Arminna West, the site of ancient ruins and a post-boat station. Because of the latter we never lacked visitors and several times during our stay various old friends from Toshka West came by on donkey-back. We were regularly distracted by the arrival of the weekly post-boats stopping to and from Aswan and Halfa with heterogeneous loads of cattle, chickens, cargo and post. We never did reach a solution of the mystery of the great loads of sacks of charcoal deposited and taken away at irregular intervals by freight boat and felucca. Much as we looked forward to the arrival of the post-boat, its presence nevertheless caused some distress because of its



unfortunate habit of mooring at the most convenient place, which happened coincidentally to be the much mistreated mud-brick walls of a Coptic monastery which extended to the river's edge and which we were naturally eager to conserve, so far as possible, for excavation. Presumably there will be somewhat less work for the Expedition in that quarter in its next season!

The camp at Arminna was luxurious, consisting of several tents a dis-used sagiyah (water-wheel), and of course the boat. The water-wheel was requisitioned by the writer, who used it as depot for pottery, workroom, and vantage place from which to admire the splendid late evening light and sunsets. The view surpassed that from the Pyramid Room of the Nile-Hilton in Cairo, although we were not so fortunate in having the beverages so freely dispensed in the capital. At Aniba, many weeks after our arrival in Nubia, a great load of treasures from America, originally intended to accompany the Expedition from its outset, at last caught up with us. Included in this shipment was a fine tent of generous proportions with a bath attachment. Unfortunately, the writer cannot attest to the bath's ever having been used for its intended purpose. Mr. Millet found it a convenient place, however, in which to set his bed and thereby to escape the various night-time insects that appeared to take a particular delight in attacking him. We were generally more fortunate in relations with desert vermin of the more dangerous type. One crisis was avoided at Toshka West, it was reported, when Ismain succeeded in withstanding an attack of scorpions seeking to invade our vessel via the gangplank. It is fortunate that no real emergencies arose, for our serpent-scorpion serum which was supplied with the boat, was accompanied by detailed instructions in German. One hesitates to think of the consequences which might have resulted by the time the verb had been reached.

Throughout the season the Qufti workmen never ceased to be a source of amusement and delight. They were light-hearted and good-spirited during the work and rarely displayed boredom or annoyance with the arduous and monotonous task of moving what must have amounted to tons of sand from graves and buildings. All those who have been present at excavations in Egypt will recall the stirring chants sung by the basket boys as they hoist their baskets of debris away to the dump. None of us will soon forget a scene at the Qufti camp on a day of rest, when several of the boys took part in the ancient game of singletick. There was something very nearly like a ritualistic dance in their elegant foot-movements and the graceful gestures of their arms. Squatting in a circle around the players, the Quftis not participating in the game called out encouragement to their favourites, applauding a well-placed strike or hissing a poor one.

It should be apparent, from all this, that life in Nubia was by no means as stringent or bare of diversion as eight weeks in the desert might give cause



to suspect. On the contrary, the salubrious climate, the beauty of the country (of the sort which only a desert landscape can offer), the friendliness and attractiveness of the Nubian people, and above all the spirit of adventure that pervaded the Expedition, made of the season a most pleasurable and interesting experience. If, as we made our departure, we thought of the pleasures of soft beds and cool beverages, we nevertheless carried away a warm and nostalgic memory of a first archaeological season in Lower Nubia.

Edward L. B. Terrace  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

#### LETTER FROM CAIRO

The many members who have read with interest Dr. Scanlon's letters of the past two seasons, will regret that this will probably be the last of his vivid accounts from the capital of the United Arab Republic. We hope, however, that it will not be the last of his contributions to the Newsletter.

Cairo  
April 10, 1961

Dear Members:

Today is Egypt's great national salute to Spring. The feast is called in Arabic "Sham an-Nessim", which in its nicest sense means "Sniff the Breeze." It is a very ancient celebration of perennial renewal, marking the inauguration of what is hoped will be a fruitful agricultural season. On this occasion one sees the most urbane of burghers along with the proletariat, wending their common, atavistic way to the country, to villages of personal or family origin, or to the oases of greenery in the teeming city; for only amid growing things can one breathe in the zephyr and release from memory the winter's rudeness. Today, the rejoicing is even greater than usual. The winter has been long, rainy, dreary, and unaccommodating. Those who could, went to Upper Egypt with the tourists; those who couldn't, grumbled and thought of the eventual delivery marked by the festival of Sham an-Nessim.

There is little to note in Islamic cultural life out here. The archaeological importance and imminent fate of the Nubian monuments have justly usurped interest, and the Islamic section of the Department of Antiquities has had to curtail its activities. Some work has, however, been carried on. The Fatimid



tombs at Aswan have been registered, photographed, and partially repaired, and three smaller projects of importance are under way.

Among these, is the repair of the mosque of Sultan Hasan, where the south outer wall is being renewed, section by section. The original stones, dating from about 1365, were from the Muqattam quarries, and the replacements are from the same source. Since most of the great Mamluk monuments of Cairo are faced with the same stone, keeping them in repair is no great matter, so long as some primary vigilance is maintained.

Such vigilance was regrettably not exercised in the case of a late fifteenth-century dwelling that formed part of the wonderful ensemble of domestic architecture in the Darb al-Labbanah, which some members may recall as the street where the Maison des Artes is located. The corner house at the bottom of the street was purchased and pulled down, and the foundations of one of Cairo's uglier apartment houses were laid before a protest was heard. By that time, it was too late, and the street had lost its character. After this depredation, it seems to me that nothing of the medieval grandeur of Cairo is safe -- the walls, the mosques, the tombs, the Citadel itself, must fall, each in its turn, in the name of Necessity and Progress. The insurance against the future possessed by the Pharaonic monuments lies only in the fact that they are situated outside the city.

The wall behind the original mihrab of al-Ahzar has been pulled down to permit some strengthening. It is to be hoped that it will not be moved, for it is essential to a reconstruction of the dimensions of the original site, now almost lost in a palimpsest of later additions and pious restorations. It is interesting to note here the difference between what has been done to al-Ahzar by later hands and the restorations of Saladin's Citadel, where accretions, including Muhammad Ali's gates, have emended the original structure without submerging it. Architecturally it has thus become a series of variations on a basic theme; but once around the Northern Enclosure (which is, after all, the Citadel) the theme dominates. The opposite has been the fate of al-Ahzar, where the restorations carried out around 1900, culminated in the reconstruction of the façade of the sahn, which so jars with the ascetic dignity and fine proportion of the original.

A third project recently undertaken is the partial restoration of the mausoleum and khanqah of Sultan Inal, who reigned between 1453 and 1461. A khanqah might be loosely defined as a monastery for dervishes, in which they trained their disciples and looked after the Sultan's tomb and mosque, praying eternally for the repose of his soul and paying honor to his beneficent memory. That of Sultan Inal is in dreadful shape, walls fallen, masonry stolen, disfigured by slapped-on, incorrect restorations in brick and rubble. Yet the



ground-plan is clear and presents an interesting complex of structures for teaching and living. With the khanqahs of Sultan Barquq and Sultan Barsbay (the former in generally good shape and the latter a dismal, straggling waste) it provides a wonderful basis for the study of the growth of dervish orders in Mamluk Egypt and complements, at points hitherto unexplored, the study of the orders of Ottoman Turkey, imported into Egypt after the conquest of 1517. It is interesting, moreover, to contrast the mosque-tombs outside the city, in the royal Mamluk cemetery, with those inside Cairo. The administration of the former was given over to the dervish orders, succored whenever the Turkish element was politically dominant; the latter were left to the care of the orthodox ulema, who generally used them for the teaching of the four schools of Islamic law, a function that dictated the cruciform-madrasah plans.

In January, I completed my cycle of five tours for members and their friends with visits to the mosque of Sultan Hasan and to a series of four royal Mamluk tombs -- Barquq-Faraj, Barsbey, Inal, Qa'it Bay. To a study circle in the suburb of Ma'adi, I gave three Sunday evening talks on the Fatimids, the Ayyubids, and the Mamluks; these were sponsored by Mrs. George Antonius, widow of the author of the well-known treatise on the modern Middle East, The Arab Awakening. Such events help to keep alive contacts between Egyptians and non-Egyptians from all walks of professional life. The series of lectures on ancient Egyptian civilization by Dr. Ahmad Fakry, now in progress at the American University, serves the same end.

Visitors of note have included Professor Oleg Grabar of the University of Michigan, at present Director of the American School in Jerusalem. Professor Sellheim of Frankfurt is in residence at the German Institute, pursuing work in early grammatical and exegetical texts. Professor T. Cuyler Young of Princeton is visiting us, en route to Tehran, and Dr. George Makdisi of Harvard is expected for a fortnight. I spent a pleasurable afternoon in going through the Mamluk cemeteries with Mr. Alan Moorehead, author of The White Nile.

Three lectures given at the School of Oriental Studies of the American University by Professor Adolf Grohman of the University of Innsbruck (Professor Emeritus of Cairo University) would have greatly interested many of our members. The first, concerning the dating of the earliest Qurans, involved a most ingenious analysis of the habits of the earliest Islamic calligraphers. Nearly all the evidence was from papyrus fragments, and the speaker put into clearer focus the disturbing difference of opinion on the dating of a Tehran fragment and that of a single leaf of a Chester Beatty manuscript.

The second lecture discussed the origin of zoöomorphic lettering, that is the employment in Islamic writing of animal or human forms as letters or parts



thereof. Here again, the evidence is sketchy and opinion divided. Professor Grohman suggested as possibilities:

- a) a Scythian source, but one that was talismanic and decorative rather than purely literary;
- b) the Turkic peoples as carriers; where they did not touch on one of what I choose to call the "civilizing centers" of medieval Islam, this style does not appear, nor does it in Andalusian or North African Islam. Spain is especially interesting, since there medieval texts deriving from Christian centers, both during and after the Islamic hegemony, present notable examples of zoomorphic Latin lettering.

Kurasanian book-art, with its peculiar, highly stylized calligraphy and calligraphic decoration, was the subject of the third lecture. Professor Grohman was able to relate a unique example of fourteenth-century Egyptian calligraphy to the Khurasanian tradition, proving that the calligrapher was, by birth and training, a native of eastern Persia, who had migrated to Cairo. The earliest example of the art is a tenth-century manuscript, in which the distinctiveness of the style is, as it were, just coming into being. Beyond that, the origin is conjectural, though perhaps not unrelated to certain ornamental elements found in the excavation of Turkic settlements of Central Asia. The triangle Mashad-Bukhara-Herat would seem to have some primacy in the search for the origins of Islamic iconography, and the Turkic tribes would seem to deserve greater credit as active, intelligent carriers, adapters, and transposers.

On the broader cultural scene, Cairo has had a rather exciting winter season. The Belgrade Opera made its first appearance here with a repertory of opera and ballet that was first-class and different. "Prince Igor", while not much of an opera (doomed as it is by a silly libretto), was the vehicle for some marvellous Slavic singing, particularly from the superb chorus. Massenet's "Don Quichotte" was in every way excellent, with magnificent singing from the basso Cangolovic, who scaled his splendid voice to the range of an old man on the verge of derangement and death. The staging was imaginative. It was apparent that the trouble with the stage of the Opera House was not its small size but the poverty of imagination on the part of those who have used it. The Yugoslavs went right back to the rear wall, removed wing scenes, and depended on lighting and geometrical platforms for proper effect. Their dancing of the national "Legend of Ochrida" was most interesting. It included a submarine episode (or I suppose one should say "submarinal" to avoid confusion) handled by the designer with great effect.

The Bolshoi troupe, following immediately on the Yugoslavs, made a comparably intelligent use of the unincumbered stage. Ulanova danced in the rather banal "Fountains of Bakhtshi Saray" and in "Chopiniana". Though she is long past



her prime, she still commands admiration and respect. But it was Maya Plisetskaya who took one's breath away. Her dancing and acting (Odette/Odile in "Swan Lake") is beyond description. The one modern ballet performed by the troupe, "Paganini Variations," to the music of Rachmaninov, was exceedingly well danced, but in creative impulse far behind the best (or even the middling best) work of George Balanchine. On the whole, compared with what we in Cairo saw in 1957, the Bolshoi have made a long step forward toward supremacy in classic ballet. (Their two potpourri programs would have been thrown off the stage of Radio City Music Hall!)

After such exciting performances, it was hard to sit through the third-rate Italian opera company, here for the annual season. Bad conducting, incredibly naive sets, posturing and bellowing. The new Aida was a fine actress, trying hard to redeem a laughable production, and whenever Fedora Barbieri (late of the Met) took the stage, one could catch a glimmer of what Verdi meant by "Il Trovatore." But after the performance of the Belgrade troupe one is no longer forced to say that the Italian stagione is better than nothing; it is worse, by far.

The very good Egyptian folk-dance company, "Reda", continues to strengthen and improve its slender repertory, and will soon be making a tour of Europe. There is no great folk-dancing tradition in Egypt, but the choreographer of the troupe has taken the indigenous repetitive steps and music and transformed them into charming vignettes of city and country life.

The United States has appeared before the Cairo public with the really wonderful photographic exhibition, "The Family of Man," somewhat marred by Stephen Foster music, and with an impressive pavilion at the International Agricultural Fair, where doughnuts, ice cream, and roast chicken are sold very cheap. Our material is intelligently displayed and an unsticky picture of rural life and our achievements in agriculture conveys its message unpretentiously and truly. It goes part way toward balancing the image of the United States as a political ogre, which it seems impossible finally to lay to rest.

Sincerely,

George T. Scanlon

LETTER FROM LEBANON

Professor William A. Ward of the Beirut College for Women has most generously



volunteered to share some of his experiences in Lebanon with his fellow-members. The following is the first of his contributions to the Newsletter.

Beirut, Lebanon  
June 1, 1961

Dear Members:

Not long ago, while digging the foundations for a new building at L'Académie Libanaise des Beaux-Arts, workmen came across the remains of a Roman temple and some beautiful Byzantine mosaics. Even though this discovery was in the heart of Beirut, the Lebanese took it in their stride, for they are used to stumbling on ruins. When I first arrived, a friend told me of "old pots and things" that had been dug up during the enlargement of the kitchen of her family's home near Beirut, and a fellow faculty member of Beirut College for Women tells of finding Roman glass while just walking in the fields near her house a few miles north of the city. As if that were not enough, skin-divers are active among the ruins that lie beneath the waters of Junieh Bay.

One might almost say that antiquities are for the asking in Lebanon. No wonder, for this little country has been host to a long sequence of civilizations, stretching from early prehistoric times down to the present. Phoenicians, Egyptians, Assyrians and Babylonians, Greeks and Romans, Byzantines and Crusaders, Arabs and Turks, have all left their footprints in its sands. Lebanon is a veritable paradise for the archaeologist. Unfortunately, however, here (as in many other parts of the Near East) funds are not available for carrying on all the work that demands to be done.

In spite of limited funds, the active Department of Antiquities is engaging in new excavation as well as in restoration. The most extensive restoration work now going on is at Tyre, where literally acres of ruins are slowly being pieced together. Though there are some Phoenician remains, the Department has decided to bring back the Roman age, and even now one can get a glimpse of what the city will look like when work has been completed. Row after row of huge pillars lie in long granite lines, to give promise that some day the great Roman temples will again rear their bulk toward the heavens. A rather large amphitheatre of remarkable preservation may be seen, complete with underground rooms where impatient gladiators once waited. Nearby are a series of Roman and Byzantine mosaic floors and remains of an Arab water system.



Work at Byblos continues, and it looks as if it will still be going on long after the present generation of archaeologists lay down their spades. To see Byblos at its best, one should climb to the top of the Crusader castle that dominates the site. From there one can see the whole expanse of the excavations and can imagine the panorama of history that left its outlines on the site. To the north, the modern village of Jebeil lies on the natural harbor that was once host to ships from all over the Mediterranean. A few lazy fishing boats now rest in the waters that long ago welcomed Egyptian coastal vessels, Cretan trading ships, ships of all the sea-going peoples of antiquity. In early days, Byblos must have presented much the same picture as does modern Beirut. It was a great cosmopolitan center where one could hear a dozen languages and traffic with merchants from most parts of the known world.

New trenches are being dug in the Phoenician parts of the ancient city. The Phoenician city gate and part of the massive wall have already been exposed. Two Canaanite temples of the early Second Millennium B.C. have been completely uncovered. The Temple des Obelisques has been moved to a new location in order to excavate a temple that lay beneath it, and there is evidence that a still earlier temple exists underneath the latter. Classical civilization is also well-represented at Byblos, particularly by a charming miniature theatre in perfect state of preservation. Once in a while a group from Beirut goes to this theater for the reading of a Greek play. Then, for a few hours, one can live in the atmosphere of an age long past.

Baalbek, rising out of the plain like a lonely sentinel guarding the memory of mighty Rome, is of course the chief attraction for the tourist. Some excavation and restoration still goes on there, though one wonders if work on such a great monument, like that on the Djoser complex at Saqqara, can ever be completed. The site is certainly not the only great one of Lebanon, though it is perhaps the most beautiful. At Naous, in the lovely olive-growing plain of Koura, which lies between Byblos and Tripoli, are the ruins of two Roman temples, which are well worth seeing. They have been pillaged for centuries by local inhabitants, serving as quarries for stone from which to build houses or to buttress the terraced fields that are such a striking feature of the Lebanese countryside. The Romans certainly did not spend as much time and money on these temples as on Baalbek, for their sculpture is rather mediocre, but their walls still rise to about twenty-five feet and enough remains to give an idea of their former, far from unimpressive appearance.

The student of antiquities has ample opportunity for research in the Lebanon. The National Museum contains a priceless treasure of antiquities and is a fine example of what a museum of limited space can do in presenting its collection. The second floor is particularly fortunate in its arrangement.



There the artifacts illustrating the history of the area are shown in archaeological sequence. All the great finds from Byblos are included, and it was particularly thrilling to me to see, so to speak in the flesh, the Egyptian gifts to the rulers of Byblos, which I have studied so often from photographs.

The American University of Beirut also has a small museum, and plans are afoot for enlarging it. This museum is especially rich in prehistoric objects and has a fine series of pottery of all periods. It will house the objects from the recent University expedition at the experimental farm in the Beqaa Valley, a preliminary report of which appears in the latest number of the Bulletin de la Musée de Beyrouth.

Library facilities are excellent in Beirut, and the visiting scholar is accorded every courtesy for study. The American University has a large collection covering the whole range of Near Eastern studies, in which one can find most of the "classics" in the field. The National Museum also has a good library, but probably the best collection of all is in the French Institute of Archaeology. Between the museums and the libraries, the scholar interested in research can happily find most of the material necessary for his work.

Not all the Lebanese activities center in the very remote past. A society has recently been formed for the preservation of buildings of the nineteenth century, which have been threatened by the rapid growth of the city and the splurge toward the "modern." In Ras Beirut there is hardly a block in which some new structure is not being erected, and the destruction of older buildings has been going on at such a rate that it has been feared that the earlier architecture would entirely disappear. This architecture, with its fine ironwork and graceful arches, has local flavor and great charm. The new society is endeavoring to raise money to purchase and restore some of the finer houses dating from the period before foreign influence made itself felt.

May I offer my best regards to my fellow members of the Center. I expect to be in Beirut for a number of years and shall be glad to help any of you who may visit Lebanon to feel at home.

Very sincerely,

William A. Ward



AN APPEAL FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

In a meeting with the Board of Foreign Scholarships and the United States Advisory Commission on Educational Exchange, President Kennedy appealed to the educational community, private foundations, and voluntary organizations to continue and expand their support and activity in the international educational and cultural fields. He emphasized that such institutions represent a national resource "for helping new countries educationally and strengthening our cultural ties with old ones," that they "have an enormously important role to play in United States foreign relations and in building a foundation for world peace."

This role has always been kept in mind by the American Research Center in Egypt. We believe that in a modest way, limited as we are by lack of great funds, we have maintained a cordial relationship between American and Egyptian scholarship, and we hope that in the future such relationship may be expanded and cemented.

DIRECTOR IN CAIRO FOR 1961-1962

Mr. Nicholas B. Millet has again been assigned by the Executive Committee the Egyptological Fellowship of the Center for 1961-1962, and will serve as Director in Cairo during the coming season. No appointment has been made for the Islamic Fellowship.

Mr. Millet will be in Cairo for most of the summer, excepting the month of August. The office of the Center will remain open, though with shortened hours, for the benefit of those hardy visitors who brave the Egyptian heat (which after all is not so very much worse than that of our own Eastern seaboard) and for dealing with routine correspondence. Mme. Labib Habachi, the secretary, will be on duty during most of the time. We repeat here the address:

Apartment 4  
23, Sharia Hassan Pascha Sabry  
Zamalek, CAIRO, Egypt  
U. A. R.

Telephone: 808038

ITEMS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST

The many members of the Center who have had the good fortune to know Miss



Rosalind Moss and the many others who have gratefully used the Topographical Bibliography of the Temples and Tombs of Egypt will be happy to learn that on June 13, 1961, the University of Oxford conferred on her a doctorate honoris causa in recognition of her long and unselfish work for Egyptology. They will hardly be less pleased to hear that Mrs. Ethel Burney, her faithful collaborator during most of her twenty-five years of work on the Bibliography, was cited in the Latin speech made by the "Public Orator" in introducing Miss Moss to the Chancellor.

Readers of the Newsletters will recall the work on the Eighteenth Dynasty temple and tombs at Soleb carried on by the University of Pisa, with Clement Robichon in charge of excavation and Jozef Janssen as epigrapher (see Newsletters Nos. 26 and 29). This excavation was financed by Mme. Schiff-Giorgini, who also acted as photographer for the expedition. A splendid result of her activity was a film recently shown by the Italian Embassy at a gala reception held at the Musee Guimet in Paris.

Professor John A. Williams, formerly Islamic Fellow of the Center in Egypt and now at McGill University, Montreal, will return to the Near East for study during the coming season. He will resume his duties at McGill in the Fall of 1962.

The former Director of Antiquities in the Sudan, J. Vercoutter, has been appointed Professor of Egyptology at Lille, occupying a chair especially created for him after his resignation from the Sudan Government.

A series of ten Tuesday evening lectures on "Aspects of Egyptian Art" to be given by Bernard V. Bothmer, has been announced by the Metropolitan Museum of Art. These lectures, to begin on October 3 and end on December 5, will trace the rise, decline, and recovery of Egyptian art from its beginning in the fourth millenium to its end at the dawn of our own era. During August and September, Mr. Bothmer will continue his recording of works of art for the Corpus of Late Egyptian Sculpture, under a grant from the American Council of Learned Societies. He plans to visit Turin, Bologna, Rome, Naples, and Athens. As will be remembered, Mr. Bothmer was Director of the Center in Cairo for two seasons. Formerly at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, he is now Associate Curator in the Department of Ancient Art at the Brooklyn Museum.

A traveling exhibition of Egyptian art lent by the government of the United Arab Republic has been organized by the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, and will be shown at various museums throughout the United States in the course of the coming two years.



A new volume in the series Bibliothèque d'Etudes of the Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire is the Montouemhat of Jean Leclant. This is a useful work, with many references, on the great vizier of Dynasty XXV-XXVI.

Herman De Meulenaere writes from the Centre de Documentation in Cairo that he has spent two weeks in Gerf Hussein checking copies of inscriptions and is presently engaged in coordinating work on the temple of Kalabsha, which is to be removed by the German Institute, a task which will require two or three seasons' work.

Summer missions in Nubia will include a Czech expedition under Professor Zaba, which will dig at Tafeh and study the fortress of Kertassi. The Italians, under Professor Donadoni, will work at Kuban, opposite Dakka. Later in the season, Dr. Klasens of Leiden will excavate a Coptic and Meroitic settlement near Abu Simbel. Professor Leclant has chosen the area of Tumas, and the French Institute is expected to continue investigations at Wadi es-Sebua.

#### PUBLICATIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE CENTER

Becker-Colonna, Andreina Leanza. Etruscan Art Exhibit. Vases, bronzes and Archaeological Terracottas from the Robert H. Lowie Anthropological Museum of the University of California. University of California Extension Center, San Francisco, 1960, 28 pp.

Dr. Becker-Colonna sends this interesting catalogue, which includes brief historical introduction, glossary, and map of Etruscan sites. Most of the pieces listed are from the collection given to the University of California by Mrs. Phoebe Appleton Hearst, but the catalogue includes also around fifty pieces from Southern Italy loaned by Mr. Alfred Koch.

Dunham, Dows, Editor. "The Egyptian Forts from Halfa to Semna," in Kush VIII, 1960, 11-24; plates and plans.

Among the papers of Dr. Reisner found after his death was the draft of a long article on the Nubian fortresses which he investigated some thirty years ago. Parts of it have been published, but a portion has never been made available. Mr. Dunham here presents this latter portion, together with references to such parts of the article as have already appeared in print.



Fischer, Henry George. "The Inspector of Youths Nfr-n-hwfw," in Oudheidkundige Mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden XLI, 1960, 1-13; illus.

Here Dr. Fischer describes two monuments of an Old Kingdom official in the Leiden Museum -- part of a false door and a statue of a man named Nfr-n-hwfw, which are of particular interest because of the titles inscribed on them.

"Old Kingdom Inscriptions in the Yale Gallery," in Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung VII, 1960, 299-315; illus., plates.

"The Inspector of the Šh of Horus, Nby," in Orientalia 30, 1961, 170-175; plates.

The first of these two articles, dealing with four inscriptions from doors or false doors of the Fifth or Sixth Dynasty is chiefly concerned with a hitherto unpublished jamb bearing the name of Nbi and discusses in great detail the titles of that worthy, particularly the title that contains a rare term, šh, known in the titularies of only four Egyptian officials of the Old Kingdom. The second article records a fifth occurrence of the term in a graffito on a paving stone from the pyramid temple of Djedkare-Isesi.

"Three Old Kingdom Palimpsests in the Louvre," in Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde 86, 1961, 21-31; illus.

A cylinder of Pepi I with titles of an unnamed official, a wooden architrave and a stone lintel from false doors of the Fifth Dynasty, all bear inscriptions that are in part erased and overwritten. In the first instance one title has been substituted for another; in the second, the name and figure of a woman, the tomb-owner's wife, have replaced those of his son; in the third the name of a prince of the house of Mycerinus has been tampered with. The possible reasons for these changes are discussed by Dr. Fischer in this article.

Review of Second Cataract Forts I. Semna Kumma, by Dows Dunham and Jozef M. A. Janssen, Boston, 1960, in American Journal of Archaeology 65, 1961, 68-69.

In his review Dr. Fischer comments chiefly on the texts published in Second Cataract Forts I, offering a number of emendations for the readings.



Jacquet-Gordon, Helen K. "The Inscriptions on the Philadelphia-Cairo Statue of Osorkon II," in Journal of Egyptian Archaeology 46, 1960, 12-23; plates.

This article deals with the inscriptional material of the statue from Tanis published by Bernard V. Bothmer in the same issue of the Journal of Egyptian Archaeology (noted in Newsletter No. 41, p. 17-18). Mme. Jacquet concludes that the text of the stela held by the pharaoh is in the nature of an oracular consultation, in which the king asks protection of his god (perhaps Amun, though the name has been lost) and submits specific petitions -- for divine aid in carrying out works pleasurable to the gods, for long life for his queen and her children, for obedience and mutual tolerance on the part of his heirs, for defeat of the enemy Libyan. Between the somewhat mutilated lines of the text, it is perhaps possible to read a fear of family dissention, so common among the princes of Dynasties XXII and XXIII. It is of interest to note that the only enemies mentioned are the Libyans, from whom Osorkon himself was sprung.

Miles, George C. "Byzantine Miliarsion and Arab Dirhem: Some Notes on their Relationship," in The American Numismatic Society Museum Notes IX, 189-218; plates.

The silver coins introduced into eighth-century Byzantium, the miliarsia, bear a close resemblance to the Arab dirhem. Some of them are actually overstrikes of Islamic coins received in trade or as tribute or booty, with the cross and Byzantine inscription superimposed on Arab legends that are frequently still partly legible. The study of these coins enables Dr. Miles to suggest interesting footnotes to Byzantine history and the problem of Arab-Byzantine relationships as well as to indicate certain more purely numismatic problems deserving of further investigation.

"Egyptian Glass Pharmaceutical Measures of The 8th Century A.D.," in Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences XV. 1960, 384-389.

This paper is concerned with bottle- or vessel-stamps, the glass labels fused to the sides of drug jars or measures, on which are named elements of the Arab pharmacopoeia. In many cases the use of the substances indicated can be traced back to classical Greece, and a number of them are employed as materia medica today. The stamps bear the names of more than fifty drugs and cosmetics as well as the measures (rarely the weights) of the contents of the vessels.



Miles, George C. "Material for a corpus of archaeological ornament of Islamic derivation in Byzantine Greece, " in Year Book of the American Philosophical Society, 1959, 486-490.

A grant from the American Philosophical Society enabled Dr. Miles to extend to Greece proper a study of Greek-Arab relationships begun by him in Crete in 1956. One aspect of these relationships is the evidence of Islamic influence on Byzantine architectural ornament, particularly in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. While such influence has long been recognized, hardly any attention has been given to determining the specific Islamic prototypes of the epigraphical and decorative elements imitated by the Greeks or how and when they were transmitted. During the autumn of 1958 Dr. Miles collected in Greece around a thousand photographs for a corpus to serve as a basis for study of these problems. His report to the Philosophical Society enumerates the sites and monuments visited and notes the nature of the material studied and photographed.

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"A Ninth Century Hoard of Dirhems found at Susa," in Mémoires de la Mission Archéologique en Iran, 1960, 69-145; plates, map.

This Susan hoard was evidently buried around 879 A.D., during a period of serious disturbance in the Abbasid Empire. The coins contained in it reflect the unrest of the times. Of particular interest are seven dirhems struck by the Zanj -- a group of negro slaves brutally exploited in the Shatt el-Arab, who rallied in revolt under an adventurer who claimed descent from Ali, the son-in-law of the prophet, and kept southwestern Persian and southern Iraq in turmoil for fourteen years. Previous to the examination of this hoard, only four specimens of Zanj coinage were known.

Scanlon, George T., Editor and Translator. A Muslim Manual of War, being Tafrīj al-Kurūb fī Tadbīr al-Ḥurūb, by 'Umar ibn Ibrāhīm al-Awsī al-Ansarī, Cairo, The American University Press, 1961, 130 pp. and Arabic transcription; plates.

In a handwritten dedication in the volume here noted, Dr. Scanlon, Islamic Fellow of the Center for the past two seasons, renders his thanks to the Center, which "sustained him in the final anguish of coming into print." The Center can be proud of having had even so small a share in this first important work of a young Islamicist. Of a basic bibliography of over fifty Islamic treatises in manuscript on the art of war (compiled by Mercier in 1924, added to by Ritter in 1929, and still further augmented by Dr. Scanlon) the present publication is one of only five that have been made available for scholarly use. The work is based on the collation of two manuscripts of Egyptian origin, one in Princeton and one in Istanbul.



According to the editor, it is not one of the most important of Muslim works on the subject, for it savors "of the library and the court rather than of the camp and battlefield." It reflects, nevertheless, the military thinking of the Middle Ages and adds to the scanty available literature on Muslim military organization. The book is a specialist's book. Its careful documentation and the glossary of Muslim military terms, which is not confined to terms used in the present treatise, will be welcomed by scholars. There is much, however, that might appeal to the non-specialist, both in Dr. Scanlon's introduction and in the translated text.

Simpson, William Kelly. "An Additional Fragment of a 'Hatnub' Stela," in Journal of Near Eastern Studies XX, 1961, 25-30; figs.

Dr. Simpson deals here with a recently discovered fragment of a stela he published in 1958 (see Newsletter No. 36, p. 15). This new fragment permits a revision and extension of the text, one of "the few documents in hieratic known to be datable in the first half of Dynasty XII."

"The nature of the brick-work calculations in Kah. Pap. XXIII, 24-40," in Journal of Egyptian Archaeology 46, 1960, 106-107.

"Papyrus Lythgoe: A Fragment of a Literary Text of the Middle Kingdom from el-Lisht," in Journal of Egyptian Archaeology 46, 1960, 65-70; plates.

In these papers, Dr. Simpson treats of two incomplete papyri. His first article is a re-interpretation of a fragment from an account, previously published by Griffith in his edition of the Illahun papyri. The second is a first publication of a literary fragment of the Twelfth Dynasty in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. While tantalizingly incomplete, this hieratic document seems to represent a narrative hitherto unknown.

Vermeule, Cornelius C. "Antinous, Favorite of the Emperor Hadrian," in Bulletin of the Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum, Kansas City, Mo., III, no. 2, October 1960, 1-7; illus.

Almost everybody knows the story of Hadrian's infatuation for the young Antinous, of the latter's suicide by drowning in the Nile, of his subsequent deification. "In Egypt, the cult of the deceased Antinous was equated with that of Osiris... and up to the triumph of Christianity in the fourth century A.D. common people placed representations of Antinous-Osiris in their tombs... as protection against rigors in the life of the